

PIANO BASICS FOUNDATION NEWS

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To facilitate, promote, and educate the public on the way of teaching and playing the piano taught at the Talent Education Research Institute in Matsumoto, Japan.

"The Importance of Naturalness"

by Dr. Haruko Kataoka

"That child is no good because he gets too stiff. That's why he can't play well." This type of comment is often heard from piano teachers. Every young child responds differently to the task of playing the rhythm to Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star on the piano. There are those who become overly tense and make their bodies rigid. There are those who become stiff from trying so hard. There are those who cannot move precisely because they are so timid. Each is different and unique.

Children who have become too stiff will pound the piano and will produce an extremely unpleasant, loud sound. When this happens, the child can release any excess tension and return to a state of naturalness if the teacher says, "Let's play softly. Listen...Like this....," while demonstrating a soft, beautiful tone.

This is a very important point. In the beginning, if the teacher and parent refrain from asking for a loud tone, the child can learn to play without excessive tension in the body. It is also extremely important for the teacher to show the student at each lesson by demonstrating, rather than by explaining. In this way, children can start piano lessons without having their inborn naturalness destroyed.

In childhood, the intellect is not yet fully developed, so it is a time when everything is perceived through the senses. Just like a paper towel, everything that is seen and heard will be absorbed without the ability to judge whether that thing is good or bad. This is why the example that the teacher shows the child is so important.

Nobody is physically stiff all the time. People are all born with a naturalness, so everyone has an inborn state of physical naturalness. When some external stimulus causes stiffness and tension, adults must teach children how to return to that inborn state.

Among the pianists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there are many who have written books on the art of performing at the piano. In the majority of those books, the single point that all pianists struggle to understand is how to become one with the naturalness of the body while making music that is focused, has power, and is filled with feeling. In researching this, the most difficult question is to learn how not to put unnecessary strength in the body while at the same time concentrating and focusing attention. Almost everyone will put too much strength into their bodies and become stiff when they try too hard and overly concentrate.

Recently in Matsumoto, there was a concert by the famous violinist Gidon Kremer. All the piano instructors and students went to hear it together. His performance was filled with beautiful, musical sound. We all felt as if the fatigue from our day's activities was swept away. This was the real thing! The hall is not that large, and we had seats where we could see his technique extremely well. Whether he was playing a passage delicately in pianissimo or quickly in fortissimo, his body was extremely natural and there was not a trace of unnecessary strength or tension anywhere. It may seem overly simplistic, but it was as if he were a puppet being moved by strings hanging from the ceiling. Even so, the sounds from his violin were beautiful and clear. Passages with speed and passion were all marvelous and yet the musical basics were all in order.

We just went to hear beautiful violin music, but it was as if we were being challenged to study harder how to retain the naturalness of the body.

In human life, we always seem to encounter the unexpected in unexpected situations.

As teachers and parents, let us be careful not to destroy the naturalness of the child's body.

(From the **Newsletter** of the Matsumoto Piano Teachers Association of the Talent Education Research Institute, Volume 4, number 1, June 21, 1995; translated by Rev. Ken Fujimoto and edited by Karen Hagberg).

"Helping Children Develop" **(On Observing the Education of Handicapped children)**

by Dr. Haruko Kataoka

A while ago I saw a television program which made me exclaim, "How wonderful!"

There is a facility in Japan called Xxen where they educate children with handicaps. The program featured a teacher of four mentally challenged students (around ten years old) over the course of a semester.

At the beginning, the teacher explained that the four children were unable to do anything for themselves because they had been pampered by the people around them. He began with a program to strengthen the children's weak legs and hips by having them take on the task of hoeing a field.

At first the children would immediately become restless and throw the tools around. They were unable to endure or tolerate the work and refused to persevere. "Their attention span is 15 seconds," the teacher said. When they could no longer stand it, the children would whine and bite the teacher or butt him with their heads. But the teacher patiently continued to teach them.

Besides hoeing, the teacher also had them practice climbing poles in their bare feet, doing forward rolls on a steel bar, jumping rope, etc. Each one of the children cried and screamed that they did not want to do any of these tasks. But if they bit the teacher's hands, he would bite back and say, "It hurts, doesn't it?"

"It hurts."

"If so, then you stop biting."

If they would butt him with their head, he would immediately butt them back and teach them, "It hurts, doesn't it? That's why you should stop." He would then order them to say that they would stop, but if they did not say it properly he insisted that they repeat it over and over again until they said it right. At night, if they did not say, "Good night," properly, they were required to repeat it until they did.

At first the students could not do their daily jogging either, but as time went by they were able to lengthen the distance they could jog. The teacher ran with them and gave them encouragement as they ran together, side by side. One day, a child who had been running alone turned back before getting to the predetermined point and returned to the starting line. The teacher, who had been keeping track of the time, knew immediately what had happened and said, "You didn't go to the assigned spot, did you? Do it over from the beginning." He made the child run the two or three miles again from the start, but this time he ran along with the child. I was deeply moved by this scene. This was true education! Not only did the teacher simply order the child to do it, but he also shared the suffering by doing the same thing. In this way, no matter how strict the teacher may be, the children will follow him. The child who was required to rerun the course ran faster than he ever had before.

When the teacher said, "You have strength!" the child was happy. At this point the teacher explained that education exists to give children independence. Educating children requires affection, patience, and perseverance.

By repeating a correct thing, by having focus and conviction, and by being strict we can lead a person to make progress and ultimately to realize great joy in life.

By the end of the school term, the same four children who had cried after jumping rope once or twice could all jump more than 50 times. They all could also climb the same pole which they were unable to climb at the beginning.

Seeing this, I felt that although there may be a difference in the content of what is taught to normal children and to those with handicaps, there is no difference in the affection, patience and perseverance which are necessary on the part of the educator. These are the same. Possibly it is because the education of handicapped children must start from scratch, because the children are unable to do basic things, that they receive a good education. In this case the teachers can fully understand those things which are most valuable to human beings. We who teach normal children, children who are able to do what we expect of them, forget the basics. We tend to blame the child when he or she has difficulty when it is probably the teacher who has forgotten to put in the effort and hard work necessary to teach.

All children are wonderful. Children only need a good person who can help them develop through strictness in the true sense of the word.

The task of teaching and developing these wonderful children is a rewarding and valuable job. Those of us who are around children must all become good people.

(From the **Newsletter** of the Matsumoto Piano Teachers Association of the Talent Education Research Institute, Volume 5, Number 2, July 24, 1995; translated by Ken Fujimoto and edited by Karen Hagberg).

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER - "The Method of Teaching Beginners"

How to Teach Beginners by Dr. Haruko Kataoka is a newly-edited version of a series of articles which originally appeared in the **Piano Basics Newsletter** from Summer 1991 to Winter 1995 and in the **Piano Basics Foundation News**, March-April 1996 under the title: "The Method of Teaching Beginners." For the first time, all articles are available under one cover. Send requests to Piano Basics Foundation, 242 River Acres Drive, Sacramento, CA 95831; Introductory Price - \$10.00 (U.S.) Postage \$5.00 (Free to PBF Members).

Matsumoto, Japan 1996 TEN PIANO CONCERT "Student Responses"

Eleven piano students from the United States participated in the 1996 Ten Piano Concert on Sunday, April 28, in Harmony Hall, Matsumoto, Japan. An informal questionnaire was presented to these students by the Piano Basics News editorial staff. Responses came from the following students:

Atlanta	Rochester	Sacramento
Bria Long, 9	Kathy Dulski, 11	Michael Champ, 11
David Spech, 14	Adrienne Nott, 9	Sherry Hatamiya, 13

Tim Chueh, 12

Stephanie Nott, 11

Carly Mompellier, 12
Bobby Wang, 11

Questions About Japan For the Visiting American Students:

Did you practice a lot while you were in Matsumoto? "Yes." ALL

- I practiced for five hours on most days. Michael
- I was worried about making a mistake in the concert. Carly
- More than in the USA. Kathy
- For about 3 hours a day almost every day. Tim

Did you practice the same or differently from practicing at home?

- Different. Adrienne, Bobby, and Bria
- I practiced the same, just longer, lots of repetition. Carly
- Differently, I did more repetitions. Stephanie
- With more detail for a longer period of time. David
- Differently, I practiced some things 1,000 times. Michael
- Much more in Japan. Stephanie
- Differently, with more detail and more carefully. Tim
- I did a lot more practices and hands alone. Kathy

Are you inspired to work harder now?

- Yes, I feel the concert helped. Carly
- Yes, but I want to take a couple days off. David
- Not really. Michael
- Yes, because I want to go back. Kathy

What did you do everyday?

- I practiced everyday and went to school some days. Carly
- Practiced. Adrian
- I did different things everyday. Bria
- I did piano and some homework. Bobby
- Practice, listen, shop and get my rest. Kathy
- I went to a piano rehearsal and practiced. Stephanie
- I practiced and went sightseeing everyday. Michael
- Practiced, ate, slept, practiced, went to rehearsal, went
- sightseeing, and practiced. David
- Practiced. Sherry
- Daily things, (met the mayor of Matsumoto) practiced. Tim

How did you communicate?

- The family spoke very good English. Carly
- I tried to speak English with a Japanese accent. Adrienne
- In English, using dictionaries. Bria
- They spoke a little English and I spoke a little Japanese. Bobby
- The mother and father know a little English. Stephanie
- With great difficulty, mostly with hand signals. David
- I used English and some Japanese. Michael
- English-Japanese dictionary. Sherry and Kathy
- Using dictionaries, my host parents could speak a little English. Tim

What Japanese words do you remember?

- Gomen nasai (excuse me), Arigato (thank you),
- Do itashimashite (you're welcome),
- Ohaiyo gozaimasu (good morning). ALL
- Yoi (ready), usage (rabbit). Michael
- Okasan (mother) otosan (father) ototo (toilet). Kathy
- Wasabi (horseradish), takai (expensive), hai (yes), and many more.
David

- Chotto matte (just a minute), sukoshi (a little), samui (cold). Bobby
- Ichi, ni, san, etc. (1, 2, 3), mo ikkai (again), banana (banana), itadakimasu (let's eat), atsui (hot), wan wan (what dogs say) oyasuminasai (good night). Adrienne
- They won't fit on the paper. Bria
- I know so many I cannot write them all down. Stephanie

What was your favorite food?

- Rice. Carly
- Curry rice. Adrienne and Sherry
- Curry noodles. Kathy
- Bread. Bria
- A bowl of rice where you use dried seaweed and made your own sushi. Bobby
- Pickled ginger and Lychee nuts. Stephanie
- Sushi with shrimp at the sushi bars (expensive). David
- Gyoza. Michael
- Sushi with raw fish and wasabi. Tim

Are the children the same or different in America and Japan?

- I think in some ways they are different and the same. Carly
- Boys act differently in Japan. They fight more at school.
- Girls are the same. Adrienne
- I think we are the same, but the Japanese children are a little more polite. Kathy
- Different. Bria and Bobby
- They are more disciplined and they like school. David
- The children are more physical. Michael
- They are more well-behaved and calm. Sherry
- Same, they care more about education and piano. Tim

Do you think American mothers are as strict as Japanese mothers?

- Yes. Carly, Bobby, Stepahnie
- No. Bria
- My mother in Matsumoto was stricter than my mom. David
- Yes, they can be at times. Sherry
- No. I think they just expect a little more. Kathy
- I don't know. Adrienne

What is most different about Japan?

- Taking off your shoes off before you enter the home. Carly
- There are more trains. Adrienne
- The religion. Bria
- They do a lot of farming. Bobby
- It's much more beautiful than America. Stephanie
- The farming. It has no security and could be easily vandalized, but the Japanese are honest. David
- It's much smaller and more populated. Michael
- The language and the food. Kathy
- The lifestyles, taking off shoes, futon beds. Sherry
- Customs. Tim

Would you like to go again?

- I would love to. Carly
- Yes! (with a big smile) Adrienne
- Yes. Sherry, Bobby and Bria
- Yes!!! Tim and Stephanie
- Yes, I had fun. David
- Yes, I would like to go again. Michael
- Definitely, it is much more beautiful there. Kathy

Questions For the Japanese Students Who Hosted the American Students:

What is your name and age?

Noko Itoh, 17	Manami Ohyabu, 9
Kyohko Itoh, 15	Takenori Ohwa, 10
Yuiichiro Itoh, 11	Takana Uchiyama, 12
Takuma Maejima, 9	Yoshikazu Uchiyama, 10
Satsuki Maejima, 14	Rika Yabana, 10
Hitomi Mimura, 11	Shoohei Yabana, 12
Yurina Nakamura, 8	Yasue Yokoyama, 12
Manami Nakamura, 5	Yurie Yokoyama, 10
Kazue Nitta, 6	

How long have you played piano?

Responses were from two years to nine years.

Do you play any other instrument?

- Violin. Rika
- Flute. Yurie
- No. All others

Do you practice everyday? How long?

- 1 hour, mainly part practice. Shoohei
- From 30 minutes to 1 hour, but always part practice. Rika
- 30 minutes to 1 hour, one hand part practice. Yurie
- 1 to 1 and 1/2 hours, part practice carefully over and over
- the area where the teacher has emphasized. Yasue
- 30 minutes to 1 hour, mainly one-hand part practice and
- practicing slowly. Yurina
- 30 minutes. Manami N.
- Whenever I start to practice the piano, before I know it, I am fast asleep. Kyohko
- 1 to 1 and 1/2 hours. Kazue, Manami O, Takuma
- 2 hours. Takenori
- 1 hour. Hitomi, Takana

- 45 minutes. Yuichiro
- 20 minutes. Yoshikazu
- 30 to 45 minutes (when my mother read this answer, she called me a "liar"). Satsuki

Was this the first time an American student stayed at your house?

For most it was the first time, but some had had foreign visitors as many as four times.

What kinds of things did you do together with your guest?

- Sports, basketball, soccer. Shoohei
- Computer games, basketball. Rika
- Computer and magic. Yurie
- Chess, magic. Yasue
- Origami, shopping, attended my English Class. Yurina
- Origami, cards, hide n' seek, playing in the sand and getting piggy-back rides frequently. Manami N
- Cards. Kyohko
- Took bath together; went to Mt. Hotaka. Kazue
- Made beaded accessories, played hide n' seek, rode a unicycle. Manami O
- Games. Takenori
- Super computer, marbles. Hitomi
- Hide n' seek, Uno game. Yuichiro
- Games, shopping, bean bag games, talking, running around inside and outside the house. Takana
- Computer, play ball, cards, hide n' seek. Yoshikazu

How are the children the same in Japan and America?

- We all like to play. Shoohei
- Same facial expressions whenever we play. Rika
- We understand each other through music. Yasue

- When eating and playing, the happy faces are the same. Yurina
- When playing in the park, we play with happy faces but when we fall, hit or stumble, we go crying to our parents. Kazue
- Both of us feel part practicing is boring and tiring. American children also eat snacks and candies a lot. Manami O
- Same Chinese characters but meaning and speaking is different. (Tim Chueh from Atlanta speaks Chinese.) Takenori
- Laughing a lot, we like shopping. Takana
- Practicing is boring, we do not like to practice. Yuiichiro Even though the language is different, the same feelings can be communicated. Hitomi
- Likes to play, feeling is gentle. Yoshikazu
- The feeling of wanting to play, having a messy room. Takuma
- Life style. Satsuki

How are the children different in Japan and America?

- Language and rules. Shoohei
- Taste sensitivity in foods. Rika
- Food we eat. Yurie
- Cultural living and meals. Yasue
- When an American mother asked child to do something, the child obediently replies, YES! Yurina
- Facial expressions and gestures are expressive and humorous. Noko
- Always knocks on the door, when taking a bath, they do not fill the tub with warm water and they do not keep the water. Whenever their names are called, they reply "Yes!" Kazue
- American children reply very clearly "Yes" and "No". Manami O
- Language and amount of food served. Hitomi
- Teasing, taking morning shower, careless or carefree, practice. Takana
- Even though I am younger, she likes to tease me. Yoshikazu
- Feelings. Takenori
- The way we practice the piano, answering any question without hesitation and everything is clearly answered. Takuma
- Taking a bath. Satsuki

What words did you learn to say in English?

- Name of objects and some vocabulary. Shoohei
- Names of food and things around the area. Rika
- Please, school. Yurie
- Like, please, and the pronunciation of ABC's. Yasue
- Names of facial features and body parts.
- "Come over here!" Yurina
- Good morning! Good night! Manami N
- "I will punch you!" Noko
- I learned how to pronounce "L" and "R". Kyohko
- Come here, tomorrow, Japanese, English, grandmother. Kazue
- May I come in? Manami O
- I learned a lot. Takenori
- Good morning, go, sleep, bath, friend, thank you. Hitomi
- Hello, no, thank you. Takana and Yuichiro
- Good morning, good, hello. Even though I had no interest at all in learning English, I had to speak English otherwise we would not be able to communicate. Yoshikazu
- Salutations, names of objects in home and others. Takuma
- I learned a lot of English - Satsuki

FOUNDATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Piano Basics Foundation is alive and well! After only a few months of existence, the membership has grown to approximately 150 members. If you would like to become a part of this new research group, please send in your dues by June 15, to be listed in the first annual membership directory.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The first annual membership meeting will occur at the International Suzuki Piano Conference, Atlanta, Georgia on Thursday, August 15, 7:30 p.m. in the Conference hotel. Election of 1996-97 officers will take place at this time. If you cannot attend this meeting but would like to vote, please request a proxy ballot from the secretary. Following the meeting will be an International Forum of teachers in attendance, during which we can share ideas in person. Please plan to attend!

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Please submit names of people who would like to become an officer of the Foundation for consideration by the Nominating Committee to: Cheryl Kraft, Secretary, PBF, 1487 Telegraph Road, Bellingham, WA 98226 by June 15, 1996. Nominees will be published in the July-August Piano Basics Foundation News and presented for election at the annual membership meeting.

WORKSHOPS

- West Coast Suzuki Music Institute, June 22-27; contact Aleli Dy Tibay, 19 Villamoura Laguna Niguel, CA 92677, (714) 495-3518.
- Saskatchewan Suzuki Piano Institute, July 15-19; contact Pat Huck, 69 Cardinal Crescent Regina, Saskatchewan S4S4Y6, (306) 586-4330.
- St. Louis Suzuki Piano Institute, July 29 - August 2; contact Jo Anne Westerheide, 11544 Sherrington Drive St. Louis, MO 63138, (314) 741-5263

As a service to our readers, we will announce workshops and institutes which identify themselves as having a Piano Basics focus.

INTERNATIONAL SUZUKI PIANO CONFERENCE

Featuring Dr. Haruko Kataoka, August 11 - 16, 1996, Atlanta, Georgia

DAILY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY 10:00 - 1:00 Dress Rehearsal for Friendship Concert (Rialto)
1:30 - 5:00 Registration (Hotel)
2:00 - 5:00 Student Lessons/tentative (Hotel)
7:00 Seizo Azuma, Piano Concert (Rialto)

MONDAY 9:00 - 9:30 Registration (Rialto Lobby)
9:30 - 10:30 Conference Opening
10:30 - 5:00 Conference Lessons, Lectures
7:00 - Friendship Concert (Rialto)

TUESDAY 9:00 - 5:00 Conference Lessons, Lectures
5:30 - 8:00 Five Piano Concert Dress Rehearsal (GSU Recital)

WEDNESDAY 9:00 - 5:00 Conference Lessons, Lectures
7:00 Five Piano Concert

THURSDAY 9:00 - 5:00 Conference Lessons, Lectures
6:00 Teacher Dinner
7:30 Piano Basics Foundation Annual Membership Meeting International Forum
(Hotel)

FRIDAY 9:00 - 5:00 Conference Lessons, Lectures
12:00 Community Friendship Concert (Rialto)
4:00 - 5:00 Closing Lecture

Each day will include lessons and lectures with Dr. Kataoka. Student lessons will also be taught by Keiko Ogiwara and Ayako Fujiwara, who work closely with Dr. Kataoka in Matsumoto.

Additionally, Seizo Azuma, conference guest artist, will give student lessons Monday through Wednesday.

Please make hotel reservations as soon as possible as space at the Best Western American Hotel is limited.

Additional tickets to the Concerts for friends, families, and students, may be ordered from the Conference brochure.

For additional brochures or for more information contact: Pam Smith, 3993 St. Clair Court NE, Atlanta, GA 30319 (770) 457-5144 or Robin Blankenship, 2518 Country Lake Circle, Powder Springs, GA 30073 (770) 943-1218

SEIZO AZUMA, CONFERENCE ARTIST

NEW VIDEO has been recently released on the Seiko Epson label and is a videotape of pianist Seizo Azuma playing a long program of mixed repertoire:

- Debussy - Suite bergamasque
- Rachmaninoff - Sonata, No. 2, Bb minor, Op. 36
- Schumann - Kinderszenen, Op. 15
- Liszt - Années de plerinage, Premiere annee, Suisse, 4 Au bord d'une source
- Liszt - Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 2, C# minor
- Chopin - Nocturne, No. 5, F# minor, Op. 15, #2
- Debussy - Golliwog's Cakewalk
- Beethoven - Sonata, No. 20, Op. 49 No. 2, Tempo di Minuetto

Copies of this videotape may be ordered for \$50.00 from Piano Basics Foundation, 242 River Acres Drive, Sacramento, California 95831. Postage & Handling: \$5.00 (Free to PBF members)

AMERICAN TOUR

Concert pianist Seizo Azuma of Yokohama, Japan will come to the U.S. in August to perform in four cities. He will perform in Sacramento, California on August 1; Dallas, Texas on August 4; Rochester, New York on August 8; and Atlanta, Georgia at the International Suzuki Piano Conference on August 11.

Mr. Azuma's program will include the Mozart Sonata K. 331, Beethoven Sonata in C# minor, Op. 27, no. 2 (Moonlight), and several pieces by Liszt, including La Campanella and the Hungarian Rhapsody, no. 2.

Seizo Azuma was born in Okayama, Japan in 1962. He began studies in piano at the age of five with Haruko Kataoka. In 1978 he entered the Music High School of the Tokyo College of Music, and in 1983 won first prize in the prestigious 52nd Music Competition of Japan. He was admitted to the Paris Conservatory in 1984 as a scholarship student of the French government. He graduated with a first prize in 1987.

Mr. Azuma has since won an imposing list of prizes in several international music competitions, including first prizes in the Fifteenth International Piano Competition "E. Pozzoli" and the Seventh International Piano Competition "Viotti-Valsesia" in Italy, and prizes in the Third International Music Competition of Montreal, and the Seventh International Piano Competition of O'porto city in Portugal and the Tenth International Piano Competition "R. Casadesus" in Cleveland. He has performed as soloist with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of Angelicum in Milan as well as virtually all of the major orchestras of Japan. As a recitalist and chamber musician, he continues to perform very actively, and his concerts have been recorded for radio broadcast in Europe, North America, China and Japan. His first solo CD, featuring Beethoven's Pathétique and Les adieux Sonatas, was released on the Epson label in 1994.

Mr. Azuma will perform on Sunday, August 11, 7:00 p.m. at the 1996 International Suzuki Piano Conference in the Rialto Theater, Atlanta, Georgia.

QUOTES FROM MY NOTEBOOK, by Cleo Brimhall

This article comprises the conclusion of the series "From My Notebook." It is the sharing of my notes from Dr. Kataoka's lectures at the Piano Basics International Conference in Brussels, Belgium. As introduction to this final elaboration of the points, reprinted here are the opening comments from Dr. Kataoka.

"The intent of Piano Basics research is to testify to the genius of Dr. Suzuki's ideas. For forty years I have studied closely with Dr. Suzuki. I want to do as much as I can to help this true method go into the world. I want to develop a group of serious leaders to continue the method in quality. Each individual is unique, so basic technique is the foundation of education. Each person will assimilate these basics with variation. Basics is our point of commonality -- such as the principles of walking, etc. My goal is to not destroy the nature of children, which they received from God. When this nature is kept, anything can be accomplished.

1. The order of the Basics principles is:
2. LISTEN TO MUSIC - This is easy to understand. Everyone can do this. It is an essential factor in music education.
3. HOW TO USE THE BODY - Music educators think they are in charge of teaching music. They forget about teaching the body. We have to take care of our body all of our lives. In everyday life we realize how important the body is and learn how to use it properly. In teaching piano the prevailing

concept is how to teach music. But the proportion should be fifty per-cent teaching of the body and fifty per-cent teaching music.

4. TONE - Recognizing true musical tone. Pianists are notorious for not paying attention to the tone they produce. This is probably due to the characteristics of the instrument. Any way you touch the keys, there is sound. It requires no real effort to create a sound. Even a cat can walk on the keyboard and make sound. So we forget about quality. Researching the quality of musical tone is important. It is not just sound. Musical tone has heart and soul. This we must instruct to children.
5. BEAT AND RHYTHM - This basic is directly connected to the fact that we are alive. We need to keep these two things. For the violinist, the accompanist at the piano provides the good rhythm and beat. So it is crucial for the violinist to choose a good pianist. For the pianist it is crucial to develop a good sense of time. The pianist's responsibility is to study tone and time.
6. STACCATO AND LEGATO - The big question is how to produce staccato and legato. You probably believe that legato is easy, that you can do it. Actually it is very difficult. Legato requires much delicate, precise attention.
7. SCALES, ARPEGGIOS, CHORDS - All pieces consist of these elements or a combination. The teacher needs to research how to produce these three things.
8. MELODY AND ACCOMPANIMENT - Students need to learn how to listen to tone. An explanation is not necessary. Show them by example. Ask them to practice in the same manner at home. Otherwise the students do not learn how to control volume. One hand practice is crucial. The melody hand sings. It is difficult for an advanced student to learn how to control the volume. They must learn how to do this in the very beginning. Traditional teaching has a different approach. Teaching this concept is often left to the advanced stage. We must change our way of thinking and teach this concept in the beginning. The pianist must understand these two different roles and research how to teach them.
9. FORTE AND PIANO - How to differentiate light and dark. The teacher must teach how to produce these sounds. This has been taught traditionally as well, but in the context of where to play, not HOW to play. I understand sometimes professors in the conservatories will give homework such as "think about how to play softly". This is OK for advanced students, but for young children you must show them.
10. PHRASING - Phrasing is in the body and in the beat. I talked about breathing in and breathing out. This has a lot to do with how to play a phrase. Just before a singing tone, breathe in! The melody will crescendo as it goes up and decrescendo when it goes down. Up is brighter and brighter, down becomes darker. You must teach how to play the scale with a natural crescendo. When students are older than fifteen or sixteen, they apply this concept easily. Sometimes you may have to teach this to the students, but the students who listen to good recordings and CD's can do it naturally. Their sensitivity grows. A good teacher insists that students hear good recitals and good music. Teachers must teach how to handle the phrase. This means crescendo and diminuendo within the phrase. Also, teachers must instruct how to concentrate on listening to your own phrasing.

11. HOW TO PRACTICE - Many teachers just say to the student, "This is the hard part, so practice it." The job of the teacher is to teach HOW to practice that part. When they come to your studio, they do not know which is the hard part. You do not say "this is the hard part, so practice it", You should actually show HOW to practice it. If you start out your lessons this way, students will realize how important one hand, part practice is. Consider Allegro in Book One. The assignment could be right hand, down and up. Or it could be the eighths in measure two, keeping the same position and playing staccato. You can use the Twinkles to assist the study. Or you could assign the left hand quietly in measure one, many repetitions.

The best way to do homework is to actually show the assignment. Then have the student do it with you. Make sure the mother is watching. Ask the mother to remind the student to do this at home. Research how to teach students how to practice. Teach repetition of a point -listening makes it become yours. By talking to my students, I re-educate myself daily. I can do what I say. I use a memo with each student, to allow myself not to forget what I taught. The memo will remind me at the next lesson. Closing comments: All of the basic techniques I have been discussing this week are necessary from the beginning. When I started to study piano, I began traditionally. So when I began my research, I had a lot of questions. Such as: At what stage do I begin instruction on a certain technique? My conclusion was that we must consider everything in the beginning. At the Twinkle level, consider everything.

Children are completely misunderstood. Adults think we must leave them alone until they are older and can understand. This is looking down on children. The traditional concept about the piano teacher is that the young child can begin with any teacher. You can find a better teacher when the child becomes better. This is a misconception. It can then be too late to teach them the basics. The most important people for children are not the college professors. The most important people are you who are here to study young children. College professors have a different function. Early education is very important.

Maybe the child will decide to become a professional musician. When that happens, they go to music school and have extensive study about music. Professors do this job. The students are already grown.

What I really want to tell you is that while children are young, they have to get a true education from you. I have told you all the basic skills for playing the piano. All of the things I have mentioned need to be taught from the beginning.

A word about READING. You cannot start in the very beginning, but you must start at an early stage. Reading is so important. The pianist has a unique task of reading. Because of this, instruction must begin early. It takes five or six years to see results.

The world has become smaller. It is easier to communicate throughout the world compared to just a few years ago. Because it is easier, please make

a special effort to contact each other and work together for a better world for the children.

Dr. Kataoka's 1996 Summer Workshops

LOUISVILLE SUZUKI INSTITUTE, June 10-14, Louisville, Kentucky:

Contact: Linda Helm, 3126 Sunny Lane, Louisville, Kentucky 30205,
(502) 485-1443, SAA Institute for teachers and families. Piano faculty
includes: Bruce Anderson, Bruce Boiney, Gretchen Smith, and Kagari Tanabe.

CANADIAN - AMERICAN SUZUKI PIANO WORKSHOP, June 17 - 21, Bellingham, Washington:

Contact: Cheryl Kraft, 1487 Telegraph Road, Bellingham, WA 98226,
(360) 734-9955, Piano Basics Workshop for teachers

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